

August 12, 1959

Dr. Richard L. Masland
National Institute of Neurological
Diseases and Blindness
National Institutes of Health
Bethesda 14, Maryland

Dear Dr. Masland:

Further to your letter of May 14th.

I am sorry not to have responded more expeditiously but it seemed to me that a program such as you had in mind would require the active cooperation of several departments. Pediatrics is now well organized here and I have had an opportunity to discuss the question with Dr. Kretchmer as well as with some of our other colleagues. We should also want a close tie with the Professor of Psychiatry and I can at least say that the current nominee for this position appears to share a keen interest in genetic aspects of etiology. Meanwhile, Mr. Shriver has written to President Sterling here concerning the interests of the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation in research on mental retardation. This must surely be the basis of your own letter of May 14th. I am writing to tell you that we are responding to Mr. Shriver's inquiry and that Dr. Kornberg, Dr. Kretchmer, and myself will be delighted to have an opportunity to discuss possible programs with you. As between Pediatrics and Genetics, in particular, there is an important gap in our research and training staff and given a sufficiently fundamental approach to the problems in which the foundation is interested, I am hopeful that their support might be instrumental in adding an indispensable element to what should be an exciting collaborative program at the new Medical Center here.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg
Executive Head
Department of Genetics

CC: Alway
Kutchmer